
COMMERCIAL ELEMENT

PRIMARY GOAL

Provide attractive commercial development serving the community's day-to-day shopping, service and recreational requirements.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Within the Rancho Peñasquitos planning area, approximately 144 acres of land have been designated for commercial use. Approximately 31 acres (23 percent) of this commercial property has been developed residentially with 602 condominium and multifamily rental units.

Commercial development is distributed in nodes throughout the community to reduce vehicle trips and provide services convenient to all neighborhoods. The Town Center shopping area, centrally located, is the focal point of the community and provides the widest variety of goods and services to the planning area.

ISSUES

Many of the issues regarding commercial development in Rancho Peñasquitos are related to impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods. Noise, traffic and visual impacts generated by commercial development are the most common complaints from the community.

While the Rancho Peñasquitos Planning Board would ideally like to review and provide comments on all commercial development proposals, the 1992 City of San Diego Zoning Code update project is assessing reduction of the number of discretionary development projects in the City. The Zoning Code update project is expected to result in the creation of new or revised commercial zones which include use restrictions, development standards and design criteria which address many of the issues regarding commercial development in Rancho Peñasquitos. Therefore, this Plan does not recommend applying the Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zone (CPIOZ) Type B to all commercially designated property nor does it recommend requiring Planned Commercial Development (PCD) permits. However, in order to implement the commercial design and development guidelines outlined in this Plan for three specific sites, two undeveloped neighborhood commercial sites are recommended for development as PCDs, and one neighborhood commercial site which may redevelop is recommended for the CPIOZ-Type B. Developers of commercial property are also encouraged to submit their development projects to the Rancho Peñasquitos Community Planning Board for review to ensure they address the following issues:

- Noise and visual screening between commercial and residential uses including:
 - Landscape buffer (extensive tree planting, shrub buffers) consistent with the Citywide Landscape Regulations.
 - Earthen berms, walls or combination of both.
 - Adequate setbacks between uses.
 - Elevation differences between uses where possible.
- Architectural and urban design considerations:
 - Compatibility with neighborhood architectural style and color.
 - Low-scale structures and signage (30-foot height limit).
 - Compatible colors (earth tones).
 - Unified design and signage theme.
 - Provision of benches and other pedestrian amenities.
 - Integrated pedestrian circulation system.
- Provision of adequate parking and an efficient parking layout.
- Provision of bicycle parking facilities.
- Shopping area parking lots must provide for shopping cart collection points.

POLICIES

- Sufficient commercial area should be provided for retail, professional and recreational uses and other commercial services to meet the basic requirements of present and future community residents.
- Major commercial facilities should be centralized in community shopping centers and commercial development should be phased to serve community growth.
- Automobile-related commercial uses such as gasoline stations, auto repair and service shops should be located near freeway access points and should be restricted from the central area of the community.
- Commercial development should enhance the community's appearance by using an appropriate architectural style in buildings, signs and street furniture, such as Spanish mission style (adobe, stucco, tile) and Old West ranch style (wood siding and wood shingles).

- Commercial developments should integrate with surrounding land uses where possible. However, landscaped buffers should provide effective visual screening and noise attenuation between different land uses.
- In order to preserve existing commercial acreage, exclusively residential development should not be permitted on commercially designated property.
- Commercial facilities must adequately accommodate private automobile traffic. Equally important, however, are accessible bikeways and bicycle storage areas, convenient pedestrian pathways and seating and public transit availability with well-designed transit stops.
- All new commercial development projects should be developed in a manner which ensures integrated design, including architectural features, continuous landscaping, shared parking and coordinated circulation.
- The City's review of commercial development projects should specifically analyze impacts upon adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Commercial development on the site at the corner of Camino del Sur and Carmel Mountain Road should avoid impacts to the adjacent vernal pool preserve and the vernal pool watershed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Commercial uses are classified into four broad categories: neighborhood commercial, community commercial, general commercial and commercial recreation. Rental space for small, community-based enterprises can be made available in all of the categories. The location of recommended commercial areas is depicted in **Figure 8**.

Neighborhood Commercial

Neighborhood commercial facilities are designed to serve the immediate shopping and services needs of one or more neighborhoods.

A total of three sites have been designated neighborhood commercial—two are developed and one remains undeveloped.

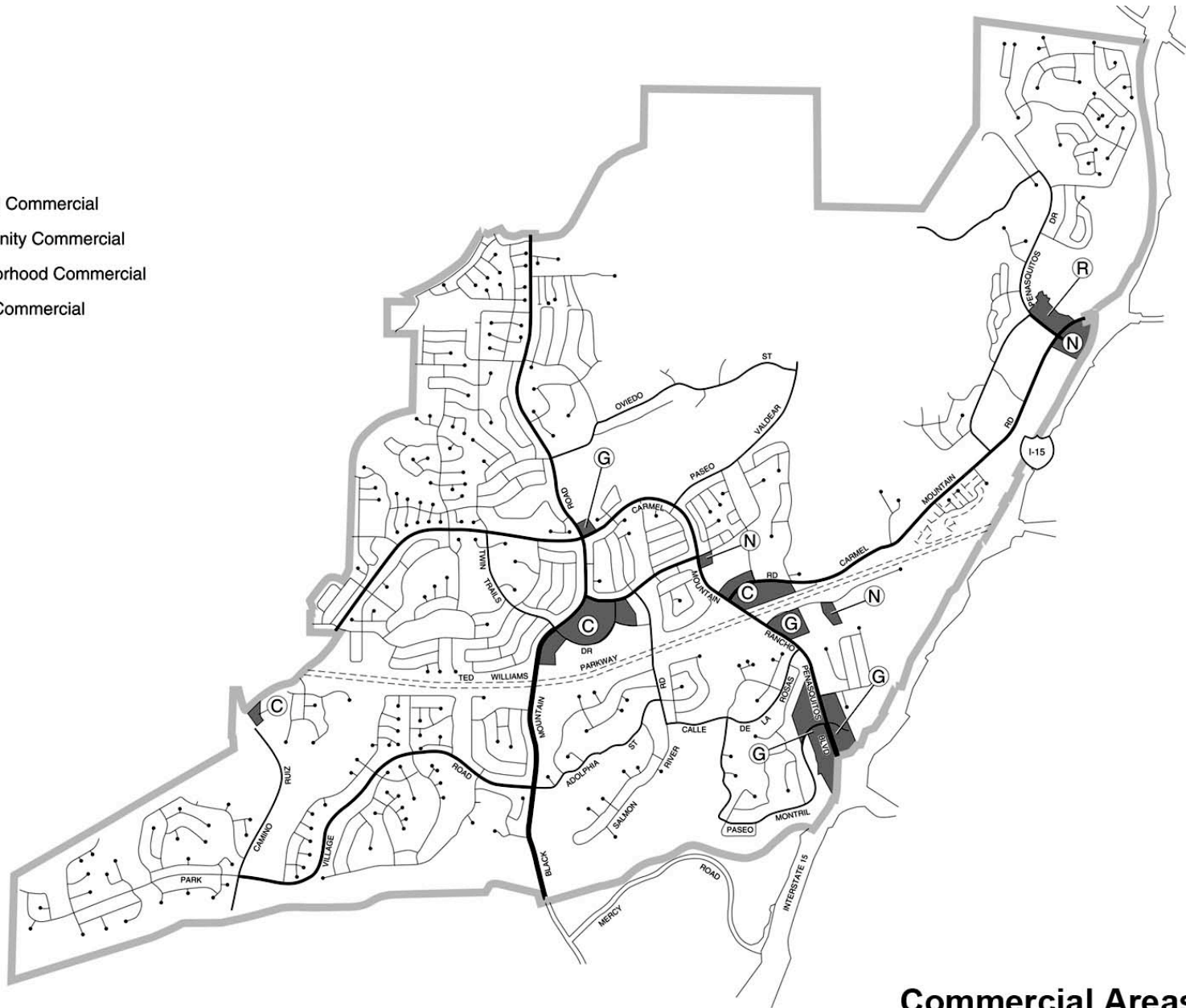
- The first site contains ten acres, located at the I-15 and Carmel Mountain Road interchange. This site is intended to serve the northern neighborhoods of Rancho Peñasquitos. Only a portion of this site is currently developed with approximately 77,875 square feet of commercial floor area. Future plans for this site may include total redevelopment of the shopping center. Redevelopment should utilize the CPIOZ-Type B or PCD permit process and should be in accordance with the commercial design and development guidelines outlined in the previous section of this Plan. In addition, redevelopment of this center should accomplish the following objectives:
 - Strengthen pedestrian connections between buildings and between the parking area and buildings.

- Tie the north and south portions of the site together to create a unified village center, providing commercial uses and institutional services to the northern portion of the community. Consideration should be given to reducing the width of Peñasquitos Drive or eliminating this stub street east of Carmel Mountain Road to help achieve this goal. The landscape treatment, signage and architectural treatment should also be unified.
 - Blank walls and facades should be shielded from Carmel Mountain Road and I-15 by landscaping.
 - Institutional uses such as community centers and day care centers should be encouraged in the portion of the site south of Peñasquitos Drive.
- A second center is located at the intersection of Carmel Mountain Road and Paseo Montalban on a one-acre site. This facility contains 13,120 square feet of retail commercial and office space, serving the central area of the community.
 - A third neighborhood commercial center is recommended on a 3.78-acre site proposed immediately to the east of the existing SDG&E electrical substation on Azuaga Street. Development of this site will require a rezone and it is recommended for development as a PCD. Approval of a PCD application requires City approval of a comprehensive project plan and involves a public hearing thereby allowing for public input regarding the proposed project. Special attention should be given to uses allowed adjacent to the substation because of the potential for noise impacts. This parcel would allow for a limited number of commercial uses and should specifically exclude residential development because of the noise-sensitive aspect. Commercial uses that could be developed at this location include: business and professional offices, medical office, private clubs, fraternal organizations and lodges, plant nurseries, church, gymnasium/health clubs and public facilities (library, fire station, police station).
 - Finally, an approximately two-acre neighborhood commercial site is recommended at the southeast corner of future Camino del Sur and Carmel Mountain Road. Commercial uses that would be allowed on this site shall provide auto-oriented-serving uses, including such establishments as personal vehicle repair and maintenance, vehicle equipment and supplies, sales and rentals, and automobile service stations (Conditional Use Permit is required). Entirely residential development of this site is specifically prohibited. Development of this site requires a rezone to CC-2-3 and is recommended for development with a Planned Development Permit (PDP).

Community Commercial

Community commercial facilities are shopping centers providing the goods and services necessary to meet the day-to-day convenience shopping needs of the Peñasquitos community. It is not intended that community commercial areas include highway-oriented commercial vehicle service or maintenance facilities.

- G** General Commercial
- C** Community Commercial
- N** Neighborhood Commercial
- R** Visitor Commercial



Commercial Areas
Rancho Peñasquitos Community Plan

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FIGURE

Three community shopping areas are designated in the centrally located Town Center neighborhood:

- The first community shopping area is a center on the southeast corner of the intersection of Carmel Mountain Road and Rancho Peñasquitos Boulevard. The site is 13.9 acres in size and has been completely developed, except for a 1.1-acre site on the eastern portion which has been developed as a park-and-ride facility. The rear of this development, visible from SR-56, should be shielded with landscaping and/or berms to reduce the visual impacts of the blank walls and delivery areas.
- Across Carmel Mountain Road from this center is the second community shopping area located on the northeast corner of the intersection of Carmel Mountain Road and Rancho Peñasquitos Boulevard. This site contains 4.7 acres and has been developed as a community shopping center.
- The third community shopping center is the Town Center Planned Commercial Development area. The Town Center area contains approximately 31.6 acres of commercial property. Development within the Town Center is subject to the PCD process.

Because the Town Center development area is the focus of the Rancho Peñasquitos community, it should be developed as a single PCD, ensuring that the entire site is developed in an integrated fashion, including design characteristics, continuous landscaping, shared parking and coordinated circulation. Special attention should also be given to minimizing adverse traffic, noise, and visual impacts generated by the development area on surrounding residential areas.

The various uses in the Town Center should be integrated by:

- Providing a major node for pedestrian and bicycle circulation, including a tie to the major north-south pathway running between Black Mountain and Peñasquitos Canyon and a direct connection into the Town Center shopping center.
- Creating an atmosphere for the entire development through the use of a particular architectural style or compatible styles, certain building and pavement materials, an integrated pedestrian pathway and compatible signing and street furniture, such as fountains, kiosks, trash containers, lighting fixtures and benches.

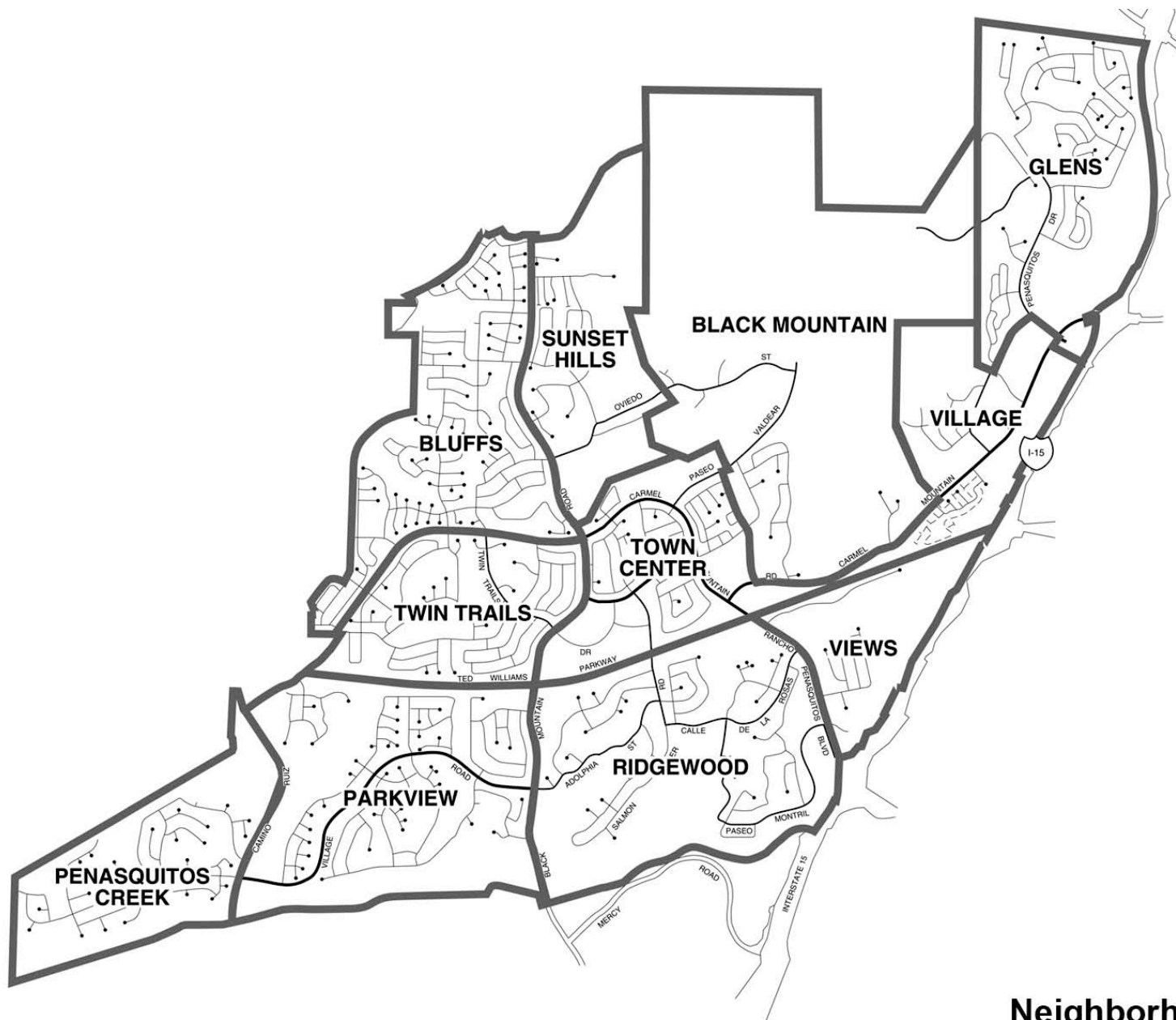
General Commercial

In addition to the neighborhood and community shopping areas, a number of other commercial facilities are required to serve both community needs and the requirements of persons outside the community. These facilities are located near the intersections of I-15 and Rancho Peñasquitos Boulevard and include commercial office, commercial recreation, auto-oriented commercial, hotel and motel and social and other services.

Approximately 47 acres are designated for general commercial in this area. Approximately 30 of these acres have been residentially developed and six acres are vacant. Although some commercially designated property has been developed residentially and may remain residential for some time, this Plan recommends that these properties retain a commercial designation in order to encourage redevelopment to commercial facilities.

Commercial Recreation (Visitor-Oriented)

One commercial recreation area is designated in the northeastern portion of the planning area at the intersection of Carmel Mountain Road and Peñasquitos Drive. A PCD consistent with the Plan has been approved on this 8.4-acre site for a 175-room hotel and associated service buildings including a restaurant, conference center and community center. The hotel and conference center is permitted by the CR (commercial recreation) Zone now on this property, which allows visitor-oriented commercial use. This Plan recommends hotel/conference center type uses for this property.



Neighborhoods
Rancho Peñasquitos Community Plan

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FIGURE